

CHAPTER 21

EAST ASIAN STUDIES

Doctoral Theses

01. DEVKI NANDAN
Mapping Sino-American Relations: 2008-2020.
Supervisor: Prof. Janardan Sahu
Th 28686

Abstract

This thesis examines the Sino-American relations from 2008-2020. This period is marked by a shift in the balance of power, competition in the strategic visions, and aggravating geopolitical rivalry. The study traces the trajectory of Sino-US relations from the global financial crisis through the end of first term of Donald Trump's presidency. The thesis has tried its best to analyze and explain through the perspective of Neoclassical Realism, how systemic, domestic, and leadership personality and perception have impacted and influenced Sino-American relations during the period from 2008-2020. This study demonstrates that Sino-US relations cannot be understood solely through the systemic variables. The domestic politics and leadership personality and perception also play an important role to understand the dynamics of Sino-US relations. The study identifies three phases in Sino-American relations. The first, under Hu Jintao and Barack Obama, involved cautious engagement but rising mistrust, reflected in the U.S. "Pivot to Asia" and China's regional assertiveness. The second, marked by Xi Jinping's rise, featured the "Chinese Dream," the Belt and Road Initiative, and a more assertive foreign policy amid U.S. concerns of relative decline. The third, under Xi and Donald Trump, saw sharp deterioration through trade wars, military competition, and ideological clashes, ushering in overt strategic rivalry. While structural realities created the context for rivalry, domestic constraints and the personalized leadership styles of Xi and Trump accelerated the breakdown of cooperative mechanisms. Ultimately, the study demonstrates that 2008-2020 was a transformative decade that reshaped the bilateral relationship from cautious engagement to overt strategic competition. From this dissertation, it can be deduced that during this period Sino-American relations were shaped by a complex mix of cooperation and conflict, strategic recalibration on both sides, and persistent search for opportunities to cooperate where interests aligned.

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1. Introduction 2. Neoclassical Realism and Sino-American Relations 3. China's Policy Towards US. 4. US Policy Towards China China Sea and South China Sea. 5 Conclusion.

02. DUBEY (Ankita)
Understanding the Japanese Occupation of Andaman (1942-1945).
Supervisor: Dr. Ranjana Narasimhan
Th 28259

Abstract

This research study examines the Japanese occupation of Andaman Islands during World War II. The occupation, which lasted from 1942 to 1945, had a profound impact on the island's inhabitants, who suffered under Japanese rule. This study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the occupation, its causes, and its effects on the island and its people. The research explores the factors that led to Japan's interest in the island, including its strategic location and natural resources. It also examines the global political forces that contributed to Japan's expansionist policies, including its "Co-Prosperity Sphere" ideology. The study compares the British governance of the island with the Japanese administration, highlighting the differences in their policies and their impact on the indigenous population. It also investigates the nature of espionage and torture employed by the Japanese and the role of the Provincial Government of Free India in the island. Through a critical analysis of primary and secondary sources, including memoirs, reports, and historical accounts, this research aims to provide a nuanced understanding of the Japanese occupation of Andaman and its significance in the broader context of World War II and Indian independence.

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1. Introduction 2. The strategic significance of the Andaman Islands. 3. Contrasting Governance: British vs. Japanese. 4. Meaning and Benefits of Espionage in Statecraft. 5. Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose's Visit and Its Implications. 6. The Provincial Government of India's Efforts to Change the Prevailing Circumstances in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands 7. Conclusion, Bibliography, Appendix.

03. KESHAV CHANDRA

Role of Intelligence in the Foreign Policy Studies of Japan.

Supervisor: Prof. Nabin Kumar Panda

Th28260

Abstract

This research highlights the important role of intelligence systems in shaping Japan's foreign policy, an area often overlooked in studies of Japanese foreign policy. While foreign policy is typically analyzed through diplomatic, military, and economic lenses, this study shows that intelligence agencies significantly influence decisions, impacting not only security but also economic diplomacy and regional strategy. Since World War II, Japan has transformed its intelligence system, expanding its focus from security to a broader role in foreign policymaking. This research highlights the intelligence community's role in transforming Japan from a defeated nation into a significant global player. Japan now adeptly addresses complex international issues while ensuring national security and promoting economic growth. This shift is evident in its efforts to establish itself as a "normal" nation, engaging in collective self-defense and active security and economic diplomacy. This study uses content analysis to examine literature on Japan's foreign policy, identifying key historical influences. It emphasizes that intelligence has often been overlooked in this context. By tracing Japan's foreign policy from the Meiji era to today, the research highlights intelligence as a consistent yet underappreciated factor. The study focuses on Japan's intelligence community, particularly agencies like the Cabinet Intelligence and Research Office (CIRO), the Public Security Investigation Agency (PSIA), and the Defense Intelligence Headquarters (DIH), and their roles in shaping foreign policy. The text emphasizes the need for better coordination in Japan's intelligence system using a framework

called `4C` (Coordination, Cooperation, Cohesion, Competition). It explains that intelligence-driven strategies can help Japan balance its pacifist constitution with current global demands. It also suggests creating a more centralized intelligence structure to address global challenges and maintain regional stability, which offers insights relevant to other countries in international relations.

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1. Introduction 2. Evolution of Japanese Foreign Policy and Growth of Foreign policy determinants 3. Discourse/Content Analysis of the Literature on Japan's Foreign Policy 4. Evolution of Japanese Intelligence and Organizational Change 5. Normal Japan and Its Role of Intelligence in Japan Foreign Policy 6. Conclusion, References.

04. KHARAY (Chirmi)
China's Energy Security Strategy: A Case Study of Sino-Myanmar Strategic Co-Operation in the Energy Sector.
 Supervisor: Prof. Ravni Thakur
Th 28261

Abstract

Abstract: China's energy cooperation with Myanmar plays a key role in its efforts to diversify energy sources and secure supply, supporting its position as a rising global superpower. Myanmar's strategic natural resources and hydropower make it vital to China's energy and political strategies. Initiatives such as the Myitsone Dam, Sino-Myanmar oil and gas pipelines, and the Letpadaung copper mine bolster China's Belt and Road Initiative by connecting Yunnan to Myanmar's coast and reducing reliance on the Malacca Strait. The thesis is centered on the energy cooperation between China and Myanmar, emphasizing Myanmar's critical role in ensuring China's energy security. By exploring this cooperation, we gain insights into China's policies and strategies for addressing its security concerns. China's actions in Myanmar could serve as a model for understanding its broader neighbourhood policies. Furthermore, studying China's energy strategy reveals how domestic and foreign policies are interconnected, given the central role energy plays in national security. However, challenges such as environmental concerns, displacement, and local opposition plague their bilateral relations. Despite these, the collaborations benefit Myanmar through investments, employment, and national revenue generation.

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1. Introduction 2. History of Sino-Myanmar Strategic Relations. 3. Energy Cooperation Between China and Myanmar: A Case Study of the Myitsone Dam Hydropower Project and the Letpadaung Copper Mining Project 4. Energy Cooperation Between China and Myanmar: A Case Study of the Sino-Myanmar Oil and Gas Pipelines Project 5. Conclusion. Bibliography.

05. MALIKA DEVI
Dynamics of Chinese National Identities and China's Foreign Policy 2002-2016: A Constructivist Approach.
 Supervisor: Prof. Janardan Sahu
Th 28262

Abstract

The thesis uses constructivism as a theoretical framework because identities as variables can only be studied under constructivism. Mainstream IR theories treat identities as exogenous. The said time period is chosen by identifying the concept of shi (勢) from Party Congress Work Reports. Shi should be well-understood because Shi circumscribes Chinese self-understanding. Shi includes two main aspects: distinctive features of our times and the international power structure. From 2002 to 2016, Shi remains constant, highlighting the evolution of identities. In the 15th and 19th Party Congress, the understanding of Shi is altered. The significance of the research lies in answering two questions: first, how Chinese elites perceive China sheds light into why China has behaved in certain ways in global affairs. Second, Chinese identities illuminate the larger question about how China will use its new-found power. The period for study is then divided into 2002-2005, 2006-2011, and 2012-2016. From 2002 to 2005, three discourses are identified; China as an accommodationist actor within the existing US-led international order, China as a dissatisfied but non-confrontational actor in the US-led order and China as a weak dissenter of the American influence. The foreign policy during the period is predominantly cooperative. From 2006 to 2011, China is under an identity crisis/dilemma. This dilemma is found in five areas: pure economic growth versus balanced growth, indigenous innovation versus relying on markets for science and technology, Washington consensus versus China Model, emerging great power versus developing country and you suo zuo wei versus tao guang yang hui. Foreign policy during this period is mixed, there is incoherence and purposelessness in its foreign policy. From 2012 to 2016, two discourses are identified; China as Marxist left decision-maker and China as a revisionist stakeholder of the international order. Foreign policy during the period is predominantly confrontational.

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1. Introduction: 2. Situating Identity Under a Constructivist Framework 3. Understanding Identity and its Operationalization 4. Chinese National Identities and its Foreign Policy 2002-2005 5. National Identity Confusion and China's Mixed Foreign Policy 2006-2011 6. Chinese National Identities and its Foreign Policy 2012-2016 7. Conclusion, Bibliography.

06. MOUDGIL (Surbhi)
China's Maritime Strategy Under XI Jinping.
 Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Ravni Thakur
Th 28263

Abstract

This thesis critically examines the evolution of China's maritime strategy, with a focus on the South China Sea (SCS) disputes, naval modernization, and the country's influence on international maritime norms. By analyzing China's historical claims, legal frameworks, and strategic ambitions, the study highlights the intersection of domestic policies, military advancements, and global aspirations that drive its maritime policies. The thesis traces the development of China's sea power from Mao Zedong's focus on coastal defense to Deng Xiaoping's emphasis on economic integration, culminating in Xi Jinping's assertive global maritime ambitions. Central to this transformation is the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and China's growing naval capabilities, which are reshaping regional security dynamics. Through the modernization of its navy, China aims to secure critical trade routes,

assert territorial claims, and challenge the dominance of established powers such as the United States. The research explores the legal dimensions of China's maritime actions, particularly its selective adherence to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and its use of "lawfare" to advance territorial claims. The South China Sea, a key focus of contention, serves as a microcosm for broader global power struggles and the shifting balance of maritime authority. The thesis also delves into the responses of regional actors, including ASEAN member states, and examines the implications of China's maritime strategy on international law and global governance. In conclusion, this thesis comprehensively analyzes China's maritime strategy, its impact on regional stability, and its challenges to international maritime order. By understanding China's evolving role as a maritime power, this study provides valuable insights into the future trajectory of global geopolitics and security in the Indo-Pacific region.

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1. China's Rise as a Sea Power: Maritime Security Strategy Since 2012 2 China's Naval Dynamics and Maritime Capabilities in the Indo-Pacific 3. China's Global Ambitions: Rewriting the Rules of the Sea 4. Diverging Tides – China's View and the Six Claimants 5. Conclusion. Abbreviations.

07. ROY (Gitanjali Sinha)
India-Japan Maritime Convergence: Scope for a Common Maritime Frontier against China.
 Supervisor: Prof. Ranjana Narsimhan
Th 28687

Abstract

The significance of the present study lies in the fact that it questions the prevailing academic consensus on China as the driving force behind an emerging common India-Japan maritime convergence against China, and focuses on Japan's all-out dependence on China for the preservation of Japan's national interest of economic revival, as the factor behind the impossibility of an anti-China India-Japan maritime front.

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1. Introduction 2. India-Japan Maritime Cooperation: An Overview (1990-2024 a theoretical Framework. 3. Comprehensive National Power of China. 4. The China Threat in Indian Ocean, East China Sea and South China Sea. 5. Possibilities of a common maritime frontier? 6. Summary and Conclusion.

08. SHARMA (Abhishek)
North Korea's Cyber Capabilities- An Analysis Through Neoclassical Realist Framework.
 Supervisor: Prof. Nabin Kumar Panda
Th 28264

Abstract

The Great Powers' escalating geopolitical and geoeconomics competition in the Indo-Pacific region has altered the balance of power in the region. In addition to altering the geopolitical alignments among regional stakeholders, these shifting power dynamics have also changed how the new and emerging technologies– such as the

strategic utility of cyber capabilities – are perceived, given their growing prominence due to the changing nature of warfare. As a result, all regional stakeholders, including state and non-state actors, have responded to the changing nature of warfare. This also includes middle and small powers, considering their national security interests. Nonetheless, among all the small powers in the Indo-Pacific region, North Korea, a nuclear-armed state with hostile relations with the U.S. and its allies, has responded differently than any other small power by also advancing its cyber capabilities, albeit for different reasons. Unlike its counterparts, North Korea has used cyber capabilities as part of its national strategy, recognising its strategic and tactical importance. It has leveraged its cyber capabilities and used them as its foreign policy tool for diplomatic signalling, bypassing the sanctions regime, or undercutting its adversary's attempts for intelligence collection. These foreign policy objectives are directed towards strengthening the regime's security. This behaviour is contrary to the other regional small powers. Given this background, an investigation of the reasons for North Korea's inclination to build cyber capabilities despite having nuclear weapons is necessary. Hence, in light of this distinction, the study investigates the strategic justification and utility of North Korea's emphasis on developing its cyber capabilities. This thesis uses the Neoclassical Realist and Strategic Culture Framework to examine how North Korea's cyber capabilities adjunct its foreign policy goal.

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1. Introduction 2. North Korea's Strategic Culture and Cyber Capabilities 3. North Korean Cyber Capabilities: Tracing the Evolution from 2009-2024 4. North Korea Offensive Cyber Capabilities: Peacetime and Conflict 5. Cyber capabilities for Intelligence Contest 6. Conclusion. Bibliography.

09. TSULTIM ZANGMO

China's Youth Culture: Continuity and Change in the Twenty-First Century.

Supervisor: Prof. Shreeparna Roy

Th 28688

Abstract

Since the implementation of reform and opening-up policies in 1978, the People's Republic of China (PRC) has undergone a profound transformation economically, politically, and culturally. The market-oriented reforms introduced by Deng Xiaoping not only integrated China into the global capitalist system but also initiated a process of cultural globalization. The socio-cultural dimension of globalization is particularly significant, as it challenges the deeply rooted cultural and moral structure that has historically defined the Chinese civilization. As Western influence expanded through globalization, youth culture evolved into a global phenomenon, transcending geographical boundaries. Rapid technological advancement, and the rise of mass and social media in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries have accelerated the globalization of youth culture, especially protest culture. The intersection of globalization and youth culture, therefore, represents one of the most significant socio-political dynamics in contemporary China. The increasing Westernization of youth poses both challenges and opportunities. On one hand, it contributes to cultural pluralism, innovation, and global engagement; on the other, it threatens to erode traditional Confucian ethics and the ideological foundations of the Chinese Communist Party. As the state continues to pursue its developmental and international ambitions, the growing assertiveness of its youth expressed through protest, art, and literature raises complex questions about governance, identity, and national cohesion. The study

explores three interrelated dimensions: first, whether recurring youth-led protests indicate the emergence of a new youth culture in the twenty-first century; second, how protest literature serves as a creative reflection of youth consciousness and dissent; and third, how the state perceives and responds to these movements whether through repression, accommodation, or reform. By examining these aspects, this study situates contemporary Chinese youth within the broader context of globalization, highlighting their pivotal role in shaping China's cultural and political trajectory.

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1. Youth and Youth Culture in China 2. Metamorphosis of Hong Kong as a City of Protest. 3. Voice of Hong Kong Youth Rebels: A Survey. 4. Implications of Youth Protest on the State and the State Response 5. Conclusion.